To Lady Campbell
with the Author's respectful Compliments

(5)

THE

HUNTERIAN ORATION,

DELIVERED BEFORE

The Royal College of Surgeons

IN LONDON,

ON WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 14, 1827.

BY H. LEIGH THOMAS, F.R.S.

MEMBER OF THE IMPERIAL ACADEMY AT ST. PETERSBURG, &c.

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TO

SIR HENRY HALFORD, BART. K.C.H.

PHYSICIAN IN ORDINARY TO THE KING,

PRESIDENT OF THE ROYAL COLLEGE OF PHYSICIANS IN LONDON,

F.R.S. F.S.A. &c.

THIS ORATION

IS DEDICATED

AS A TESTIMONY OF RESPECT FOR HIS TALENTS, ERUDITION,

AND UNIFORM PROFESSIONAL LIBERALITY,

BY HIS OBEDIENT HUMBLE SERVANT,

THE AUTHOR.

THE

HUNTERIAN ORATION.

In attempting a subject which has been so frequently and ably treated in this place, I cannot but feel diffident of my own powers, nor avoid acknowledging the arduous task I have undertaken. Yet, on this memorable occasion, which has been so often graced with all the powers of eloquence and learning, it shall not be said, that I have refused to lift up my voice, in praise of that great Man, whose natal day we are again assembled to commemorate; to express my gratitude to those who have successfully laboured in the advancement of Medical knowledge; or to endeavour to excite the emulation of the younger part of this Audience, by reminding them, that of those who have distinguished themselves by patient investigation, and well directed talents, the Living are honored, and the Dead are not forgotten.

It is not my intention to dwell upon the ancient history of our profession; a subject upon which repetition would be unavoidable, and novelty scarcely possible: still, it is

interesting at all times, to trace the causes which have impeded it's advancement;—it is pleasing to look back upon the past; to watch the progress of the human intellect, from the first excitement of it's curiosity, to the latest period of its discoveries; and by the darkness which surrounded those in earlier ages, to judge more fully of the light of our present knowledge.

The remarks which I shall venture to make upon this point, will be few.

When we consider the great attainments of the ancient Greeks, not only in the fine Arts, but also in the graver studies of science and philosophy, we are naturally led to enquire, why they did not turn their attention, in an equal degree, to Anatomy and Surgery? The benefits derived from these Sciences in arresting the progress of Disease, in restoring health to the body, and gladness to the heart, they could not fail to acknowledge; but that unfortunate prejudice against the dissection of the human subject, which is indeed at first sight most natural, and enforced by every law of private affection, was more powerfully supported by the dictates of their religious rites; and thus the interests of the living were sacrificed, in the superstitious idea, that the shades of the dead were able and ready to avenge themselves for even the slightest omission in the customary forms of interment.

Still however, it was not to be expected that a Study, for which the wants and infirmities of Man so imperiously called, should be altogether neglected; and the Schools of Alexandria which were frequented by numbers of the most enterprising spirits, from the neighbouring, and even the

remotest countries, at length supplied the Anatomist with the advantages of systematic instruction.

How far this excellent Institution might have tended to a still greater increase of Anatomical knowledge, it is now impossible to say; but in it's extinction, we have to lament that unfortunate chain of events, which introduced barbarian hordes into the fairest provinces of the civilized world; and at once checked the progress of all intellectual improvement.

An age of anarchy and bloodshed was succeeded by one of peaceful ignorance and the most abject superstition. It was then, when Learning was confined to Monks and Monasteries, and knowledge was circumscribed and hemmed in by Papal Edicts, that we have to lament a general stagnation in the prosecution of the most useful Sciences. Yet there were, even in those days of supineness, some enquiring minds, some daring spirits, who ventured to explore the interdicted branches of science! Even Anatomy occasionally found a friend; under whose fostering care it was sheltered and cultivated, in the best manner that the times permitted.

The works of those who had flourished in a happier age, though neglected, still existed; while fortunately for us, amongst the other invaluable records of Grecian lore, the writings of Hippocrates and Galen were preserved; preserved for the gratitude of posterity, which upon these foundations was about to erect the present improved fabric, which we now labour to support, and to augment.

On that second dawn of reason which was produced by the discovery of Printing, Anatomy was studied for more

purposes than one. It was neither fancy nor imagination, which suggested to Corregio, the exquisite grace and beauty of the figures he pourtrayed; nor to Michael Angelo, the bold outline, and swelling muscles, which characterise his designs—They studied Nature with a Master's eye, and in the page of Anatomy found unrolled those secrets to which they have given Form and Beauty on the canvas.

To enter into a minute account of the great names who, since that period have distinguished themselves and the Profession, would be tedious and unnecessary; still I gladly seize this opportunity of expressing the veneration I feel towards them, and of offering the humble tribute of my praise to men, who, in their writings and discoveries, have raised their own imperishable monuments. But let me now direct my attention particularly to him to whose memory it is our more immediate object to do honor.

After the many able Sketches which have been drawn of the character of JOHN HUNTER, by men who were his contemporaries, it may appear presumptuous in me to attempt the subject (who, at his death, was but young in the profession); but I cannot help thinking, that the impression, which such a man made upon a youthful mind, may not be uninteresting, nor wholly unworthy of being recorded. It may perhaps tend to excite emulation; for, though it has been argued by some, that examples drawn from men of the greatest genius are more calculated to damp than encourage emulation, this can never be the case with respect to him: his conspicuous talents, his mental superiority, may indeed be unattainable; but all may emulate his persevering industry; his strenuous endeavours for the improvement of

his profession—his noble candour and pure disinterestedness! If then, any facts unfolding the character of this illustrious man are yet preserved in the memories of those who knew him, it would be injustice to the world not to promulgate them; and on what occasion can they be produced more fitly than on the return of this day?—it is this conviction that emboldens me to speak from my own personal recollections.

Upon my first arrival in London, on presenting a Letter of introduction from a mutual friend, he desired to see me at five the next morning!—Having already the highest respect for his great professional talents, it may be easily imagined to what a height my curiosity was raised by so extraordinary an appointment: no one will doubt my punctuality of attendance.

I found him in his Museum, busily engaged in the dissection of insects. The interest which he seemed to take in his employment—the sagacity of his observations on it—the acuteness of his general remarks upon whatever subject was started—the almost blunt manner in which he questioned me respecting my medical education, united to the kindness of his admonitions relative to my future plans—made a very forcible impression on my mind: it was a mingled feeling of profound respect, surprise, and admiration.

Comparative Anatomy and Zoology had even at that time been much cultivated abroad, but John Hunter was decidedly the first who introduced the study of these interesting pursuits into England; and thus led to a more particular developement than had hitherto been known of the uses and functions of the different parts of the human structure.

From the rapid advances which these branches of Anatomy have since that time made, through the peculiar tastes and talents of so many ingenious men being directed towards them, it may be difficult to understand what a new world of science opened to me during this first interview. With great truth, I may add, that each succeeding one but served to render the first impressions of his character more indelible.

As his Dresser at St. George's, I had sufficient opportunities of admiring the caution with which he investigated the peculiarities of each uncommon case; and the discrimination which ever led him from symptoms to their true causes.

My attendance at the Hospital was unexpectedly shortened, by an act of kindness on his part towards me. Lord Macartney having applied to him for an Assistant Surgeon to accompany the Embassy then about to be sent to China, he mentioned me to his Lordship; of course such a recommendation was sufficient, and immediately secured me the appointment. The Embassy sailed from England in 1792.

On our voyage homewards, we fell in with a small merchant vessel, on it's course to New South Wales. When the master came on board, he was instantly assailed on all sides with anxious enquiries for news from England. Almost amongst the first public occurrences he mentioned was the sudden death of John Hunter. That I should in common with most others who heard the account, deplore the loss which science had sustained, was most natural, and that I should individually lament the death of one for whom I entertained such sentiments of gratitude and attachment;

but still I was much consoled, and felt a proud satisfaction in hearing a plain unlettered seaman, in the midst of the Pacific Ocean, pay such a tribute of unpremeditated respect to the memory of departed genius and worth.

This man's relating the circumstance as one of national importance was the more striking, as he might have riveted our attention by recording the events of the war which had lately commenced; or by detailing the atrocities attending the Revolution in France, which at the time of his leaving England was raging in all it's horrors.

Such is the monument erected in the human heart to the benefactors of mankind;—to public talents and private worth;—the characters upon which the gratitude of posterity renders indelible.

I shall now proceed, but with all due deference, to offer a few remarks upon a point, which has always struck me, as peculiarly influencing JOHN HUNTER's professional superiority.

It has been generally thought that he laboured under great disadvantages, from the irregularity of his early education, and subsequent want of taste for reading; which, when his mind was at length directed to a regular profession, made him consume much valuable time in making experiments, the results of which were before ascertained; and in the prosecution of discoveries *made by him*, but which were already known. This opinion is however more specious than just; he came to the investigation with a mind clear and unshackled; he became the depository of facts discovered by himself; whereas had he proceeded upon the pre-conceived opinion of others, he would have

passed on, as many have done before him, leaving the ground unexplored; and the many important discoveries, the many ingenious observations, which arose out of impressions, received during the course of his own investigations, would have been lost to the world.

That we are indebted for some of our most useful and valuable discoveries to men, whose education has been desultory, if not neglected, is an acknowledged fact; and it would appear, as if the routine of classical education, though tending to fertilization in general, in some peculiar instances may be said to induce stagnation. The human mind directed in a regular channel, sometimes takes it's course smoothly, assents, without the trouble of examination, to many things which it does not comprehend; relies and reposes on the discoveries of others; and thus puts a stop to all originality of thought, and vigorous pursuit of truth.

Not so was it with this extraordinary man; the calibre of whose capacious mind, not being circumscribed by this devotion to received opinions, studied solely the book of nature! whose language is universal, and whose novelty is inexhaustible; and which being traced by the hand of unerring wisdom, contains no fallacies, and invigorates whilst it expands the mind. In this he read, observed, and reflected; pursued, and elucidated, with the most patient and unwearied diligence: but nature has her mysteries sacred and impenetrable to human eyes; and whenever we attempt to investigate them, we get bewildered in intricacies, which the highest order of intellect has been hitherto unable to unravel.

What powers may be granted to ages yet unborn, it is

impossible to say; it is not the spirit of research and investigation which one would wish to see quelled; under due regulation, it can lead to nothing but good, but it unfortunately appears one of the irresistible impulses of genius, to endeavour to explore those mysterious regions on whose confines it seems as unsafe as it is unprofitable to range.

The sagacity and penetration of Hunter himself, were unequal to the *whole* volume of nature; but he only failed, where the objects of his enquiries were beyond the reach of human power:—Happily for himself and others, his sobriety of judgment made him generally employ his time, in more valuable and attainable pursuits.

The time at which he really felt the want of a regular education, was, when he found it necessary to unload his memory of the treasures which it had amassed; to commit his thoughts to writing and impart them to the world: then only, when the difficulties of a subject, were frequently of themselves sufficiently embarassing, was it to be regretted, that he was deficient in that facility of language which presents the ideas of the author in all the clearness of their original conception: but when we remember that his originality of thought, and his independence of judgment, leading him to differ from many who had preceded him, had formed a gradual chain of new, and extraordinary discoveries, which in a manner exhausted the language of science; we can scarcely wonder at that obscurity in his writings, which we have occasionally to lament.

To one in his circumstances and of his peculiar turn of mind, there can be no doubt that he enjoyed singular advantages under his brother's tuition.

Having at length found in Anatomy an object of deep excitement, one worthy of all his powers, the first impulse to industry was given. The daily interchange of anatomical knowledge which such a school as Dr. William Hunter's could not fail of producing, amongst intelligent men, must have been a powerful stimulus to such a mind as his; eager after information, constantly searching for truth, from them, he may in some measure be said, to have inhaled the very essence of physiological knowledge. Amongst them he acquired *all the information*, that results from the *concentrated wisdom* of ages, joined to the improvements of modern discoveries.

Yet these advantages, great as they must be acknowledged to have been, were not in themselves sufficient to account for his soaring so much higher than his competitors. It was his original expanse of thought—his being exempt from that prejudice in favor of ancient authorities, which frequently fetters the youthful mind, and is often but a respectable excuse for the indulgence of indolence—it was his sturdy determination of investigating for himself—his deep scrutiny of every object that came under his inspection—his vigorous intellectual activity, and dedication of hand and heart to the subject, that made him such an honour to his profession—such a luminary to his age!

The invaluable collection surrounding us, would of itself be sufficient, to place his amongst those few pre-eminent names over which time has no power, but to render them additional honour, as mankind become more enlightened.

Could he now behold his Museum an object of national interest, and witness the pride which all classes of men take

in being allowed to contribute to it; the additions which are daily making to it, from every quarter of the Globe;—and the gradual increase of each department, keeping pace with the increasing knowledge of the age; he would joyfully acknowledge that his labours were repaid—his most sanguine hopes fulfilled.

I must now venture to indulge in the recollection of one who has a fair claim to our attention from his close connection with the *Hunterian School;* and whose labours, as unremitting as they were successful, have placed the name of CRUIKSHANK amongst the distinguished of our profession.

It would indeed be ingratitude in me, to pass over in silence, this opportunity of paying my public tribute of respect and affection, to *his* memory, whose valuable instructions as a teacher, and kindness as a father, I may consider as the original cause, of my having this day, the honor of addressing you.

Many years have elapsed since his death—party and prejudice have alike passed away, and are at rest—and it is now only, that his character can be justly estimated!

To the few friends who now survive him, I do not fear to appeal for the truth of my assertion; that he was a man of more than ordinary stamp; one whose talents, and numerous excellences, inspired a strong and devoted attachment; whose virtues were warm from the heart; whose errors were from the head alone, and so mingled with, and allied to estimable qualities, as only to excite a more lively interest in his welfare.

Of his talents, the works which he has left behind him are the best testimony; of his book on the Absorbents there can be but one opinion—that it classes with the most valuable *medical* publications of modern times; but it was those alone who enjoyed the advantages of his friendship, and the pleasure of his private society, who could fully appreciate his worth—or judge from what he was, what he might have been.

No one could have been more perfectly disinterested; or less mercenary and selfish; nor have entertained a loftier disdain for every species of artifice and deception.

His door was never closed against sickness or sorrow—nay, almost fortunate might those poor persons consider themselves, who, labouring under any new or extraordinary diseases, applied for his assistance; in such cases his devotion to his profession, his keen and inquisitive pursuit of knowledge, and his natural kindness of heart, made his time, his talents, and his purse equally at their service.

Diseases will of course occasionally present themselves, in which all human aid is vain; but it may be truly asserted of him, that though his skill necessarily failed in such cases, his benevolence never did.

Though sometimes irascible from hurry of professional duties, his manners with his patients were usually conciliating and kind—for an example I may quote the authority of Dr. Samuel Johnson, who, in his last illness, grateful for his kind and assiduous attendance, remarked to a mutual friend, that "Cruikshank might justly be called in the phrase of his country— a sweet blooded man."

He was in habits of intimacy with most of the literary

men of his time; by whom he was not more valued for his great medical skill, than for his taste in literature and the arts, and acquirements in general knowledge.

To these he joined a tenacity of memory as valuable as it was rare; which with his correct judgment gave a readiness and aptitude of quotation, that threw a peculiar charm over his conversation.

How much it is to be regretted that great talents and genius are so frequently accompanied by such a morbid susceptibility of nerve, as casts a gloom over the days they were destined to brighten; that the close and intense application, the sedentary habits, by which superiority in most sciences is acquired, should engender a disease, which blights the fairest prospects; making those retreat who are best qualified to advance; and those to distrust, who ought to have most confidence in themselves.

This is the more to be lamented, as this physical infirmity is but too apt to foster the moral one,—a suspicious temper,—a heavier misfortune cannot afflict human nature; pervading alike public and private life, and under the influence of which the best intentioned actions are misconstrued—affections alienated—friendships dissolved!

Labouring under this nervous malady, which had assailed him from early youth, Mr. Cruikshank's pre-eminent talents, and many noble qualities, were occasionally obscured and their course impeded. To the same cause may in a great measure be attributed, his want of success as an operative Surgeon. The head had every requisite for the most difficult operations; but the tremulous hand, failed often in

the execution of them. This of course prevented his elevation to that rank in the profession, to which his education and abilities so fully entitled him.

His celebrated preceptor Dr. Hunter, having made the department of midwifery the more immediate object of his practice, it was naturally to be expected that the pupil would follow in the same path. But still his superior knowledge of Anatomy, often led to his being consulted in cases, which may be considered as more properly belonging to the province of the Physician.

Forty years back, this was accounted a professional innovation not to be tolerated, and of course excited much general animosity against him.

Highly independent of spirit—and very tenacious of a just appreciation of his talents;—dignified and fearless by nature; but timid through abstraction of mind, and shrinking through acuteness of feeling, his was a character as little calculated to struggle against those hostile feelings, as to employ those conciliatory measures by which they might have been appeased.

With talents that would have honored any profession; and acquirements that would have embellished a high private station; there could not have been a man more unfit for mingling in the common intercourse of active life; or one more deficient in that knowledge of the world, which should regulate the judgment, and which can alone preserve us from inconsistency.

He was born in Edinburgh in 1745, and distinguished himself very early at the University there, not only by his

talent, but by his powers of application, and extraordinary memory; for an effort of which, at the early age of thirteen, he obtained the prize given by Dr. Ersken of Culross.

Amongst the middle ranks in Scotland at that period, any indication of superior abilities was predestined for the church; and there is something peculiarly respectable, in this pious dedication of first rate talents, to the service of him, who bestowed them. In consequence of this appropriation of intellectual endowments, his father removed him at the age of eighteen to the University of Glasgow. After a residence here of four years, he took the usual degrees—having by his assiduity and application, in every respect fulfilled the hopes of which his early talents had given promise. His facility of acquiring languages, had enabled him to teach himself French and Italian—at that time considered rare acquisitions, and he was employed in giving private lessons in these languages to the students. He was now selected by Provost Buchanan, as tutor to his family. He afterwards resided in the same capacity at Lord Dundonald's. At this important period of his life, he most happily met with a kind and able friend, in that acute observer of men and manners, the late celebrated Dr. Moore—to whose sons he became private tutor for a short time. To him he first communicated the scruples of conscience which had arisen during the prosecution of his theological studies;—his repugnance to entering the church,—and his very strong predilection for physic. Dr. Moore rather encouraged than dissuaded him from following the bent of his inclination; and gave him every assistance in his power for that purpose. Under his roof,

and immediate inspection, he studied surgery and pharmacy; and had the advantage of an excellent medical library; but anatomy was the branch in which he excelled, and for which he shewed such a decided taste!

It is a very curious coincidence, that in the life of Dr. Hunter, it is asserted, that he entertained the same scruples, and felt the same predilection! What a loss the science of Anatomy would have suffered had the preceptor and pupil both followed their original destination.

Dr. Hunter having separated from his colleague, Mr. Hewson, was desirous of finding a young man properly qualified to assist him in the dissecting room. For this purpose Dr. Pitcairn wrote to the College of Glasgow, and through Dr. Moore's kindness, Mr. Cruikshank was recommended;—accordingly he came to London in 1771.

Dr. Hunter was not slow in discerning the value of a young man, who, to a superior classical education, joined so striking a similarity of taste with himself. Under his protection, he was not only enabled, but encouraged to prosecute his favorite study; and he certainly enjoyed in this school, such peculiar advantages, as could not at that time have been found elsewhese. He now gave himself up to the study of Anatomy with an ardour and perseverance, which was only to be checked by loss of health. Amongst a variety of other advantages which his situation in Windmill-street afforded him, was the use of the valuable and extensive library, which it was one of his employments to superintend and arrange. It was from this source that he derived that extended knowledge of the ancient medical authors, with which he has been accused of occasionally

overpowering his pupils, and of which some of my present auditors, grown gray in the service of the profession, will no doubt retain a perfect recollection.

When from too close confinement and sedentary habits, his physical powers were for a time suspended, and a hemorrhage from the lungs obliged him to remove into better air, his mind was still actively employed; and during a protracted illness, the result of which he too well knew to be uncertain, his only solace were his books. It was during this long confinement, that he projected and arranged in his mind, the plan of his work on the Absorbent System.

The powers of his constitution, aided by a more generous diet, at length prevailed; and after some months absence, he was enabled to resume his duties in the dissecting room. His recent indisposition, however it might have debilitated his frame, caused no diminution in his zeal and activity of mind. He was soon after his return regularly employed in giving the demonstrations, and occasionally lecturing, whenever the particular branch of the art in which Dr. Hunter practised, detained him beyond the appointed hour.

How he succeeded is too well known to require any comment, but it must be acknowledged, that it was rather an appalling undertaking to become the substitute of a Lecturer, whose finished and correct style of teaching admitted of no competition. Dr. Hunter gave the best proof of his satisfaction by admitting him finally to a share in the Lectures during his life; and at his death associating him with his nephew.

Much to the advantage of his profession, Mr. Cruikshank entered life without fortune, and with few connexions – no

engagements to distract his attention,—no other object of science to divide his enthusiastic attachment to Anatomy; which in after life never abated. Like John Hunter, he considered every hour lost that was not in some way accessory to it's advancement; and his recreations were simply a change from one branch of it to another.

At that time public Dispensaries were by no means so numerous as at present; and letters of recommendation, difficult to be obtained. This induced him to adopt the plan of giving gratuitous advice to the poor, at his own house, during the early part of the morning. The numbers which flocked there is perfectly incredible; and must have been witnessed to be believed. An indulgence which at first was granted, and acknowledged, as an especial favour, became in time to be considered as a right, and any interruption in it's course was looked upon as an act of great injustice. Of course, as in all cases of indiscriminate charity, his humanity was but too often abused,—his temper irritated,—and his time engrossed, to the great detriment of his private practice. The great annoyance which such a promiscuous crowd proved to the *regular patients* who visited him, at length obliged him to circumscribe his charity, and limit the numbers of the gratuitous cases.

In anticipation of the time at which Dr. Hunter's Museum was to be sent to Glasgow, one of his great objects was to make such a collection of preparations, as might assist him in the illustration of his lectures and demonstrations. In this pursuit he was indefatigable, sparing neither labour nor expence to make it useful and valuable; and, in this employment, he was principally assisted by his very

ingenious house pupil, the late Mr. Wilson, whose excellence in the art of making preparations was unrivalled.

As Mr. Cruikshank's death was sudden, and at what may be considered an early age (fifty-five), his pecuniary affairs were not in a very flourishing state when it took place. His family were therefore induced to accept an offer from the Russian Government for his Collection, and it is now at St. Peterburgh; where it is to be hoped, it will form a nucleus for a Museum, such as the climate will admit, by which his name and talents will be deservedly handed down to posterity.

The immediate cause of his death was apoplexy, which he had always foretold would terminate his existence. He was led to prognosticate this event from the circumstance, that whenever he stooped forward, or, in short, when from any cause the free return of the blood from the head was interrupted, he was conscious of a peculiar thrilling sensation, in the superior surface of the left hemisphere of the brain; and at this point, it was found upon examination after death, the mischief had actually taken place. This portion of the brain had the appearance of having been torn; and the effusion of blood in the surrounding parts was very considerable. There were no other marks of disease within the cranium, excepting a deposit of osseous matter adhering to the falciform process of the dura mater.

He had also laboured under many other symptoms, denoting cerebral disturbance, and as these bore so strong a resemblance to a similar case in a near relation of his own, I am induced to enumerate a few of the most important, and to elucidate the subject, as far as the evidence of two

cases will admit, occurring at the same time; and which were repeatedly and most carefully investigated.

As friends they were almost in the daily habits of communicating with each other, and their similar distressing sensations, were, as may be imagined, the frequent topic of conversation. They were both men of lively imagination and quick parts; their habits of life had been so far similar, that the mind had been actively employed in both, though in very different situations.

They were each subject to an entire loss of memory; which occasionally occurred in the midst of the most animated conversation, as well, as when the mind was in a state of quietude. This suspension of intellect was merely transient; and it's restoration was equally sudden. The sense of smelling was also very obtuse; commonly the strongest volatiles would scarcely affect the organ, yet whenever any circumstance occurred to excite painful emotions in the mind, they were liable to be assailed with, and suffered the most poignant distress from, the sensible impression of odours, which they invariably described as horribly offensive. Indeed the pallid face and hurried state of the whole system, very clearly denoted the intensity of their sufferings. They were subject to frequent and violent fits of sneezing, and Mr. Cruikshank often remarked that the organ of smell must have numerous unknown nerves in it's composition, to explain the complexity of his feelings.

A very short time only intervened between the decease of these relatives; similar in their death, as in the precursory symptoms. Mr. C. was the survivor; and investi-

gated with careful and deep attention the state of parts within the cranium. Here blood was found affused to a considerable extent in the left hemisphere; and a bony deposit was attached to the anterior portion of the falciform process.

The resemblance in each case was very remarkable; but in neither did the most careful examination detect the slightest alteration in the natural and healthy appearance of the structure of the olfactory nerve.

The space of time allotted for the delivery of this discourse does not admit of my entering into a full and critical exposition of Mr. Cruikshank's published works; I shall therefore merely notice them with a few short remarks, in the order in which they were published. In the year 1774, in consequence of the disputes, and contrariety of opinion which at that time prevailed between Fontana, Arneman, and other philosophers of the day, on the regeneration of the nerves, his attention was first directed to that important subject, and the experiment of dividing the nerve in the living animal, suggested itself to him as the most decisive method of arriving at a just conclusion. After having performed a number of ingenious experiments on rabbits, by the division of the par vagum in the neck, he clearly demonstrated the fact that the reunion of the cut nerve was completed, and that in a certain time the natural functions of the parts were entirely restored. The result of these experiments were submitted to the Royal Society, and the Paper was presented by John Hunter as early as 1776; but whether at that time the subject was not considered sufficiently elucidated, or whether the opinion of

the Council was not unanimous with regard to its importance, certain it is that the paper, after being read, was laid aside until the year 1795, when a Dissertation on the same subject, was presented by that able Physiologist Dr. Haighton. It was now that the attention of the President and Council, was directed by his friend Sir Everard Home to the reconsideration of Mr. Cruikshank's paper; when he had the satisfaction of seeing his communication rescued from oblivion, and after an interval of 19 years the priority of his claims unequivocally acknowledged.

Soon after this, he was elected a Fellow of the Royal Society. In 1797 he presented a paper on Impregnation, which he illustrated by a regular series of experiments, and observations on the progress of gestation in the Fallopian tubes and uterus of the Rabbit. By an uncommon coincidence he was again followed by Dr. Haighton, and their conclusions on this intricate and mysterious subject, were nearly similar. Dr. Haighton pursued the same views, and arrived at nearly the same conclusions.

In 1795, he published a Tract on the Insensible Perspiration of the Human Body. The object of this work was to give a more correct and extended view of the Anatomy of the Skin; and also, what may be considered of more real importance, to prove, by direct experiment, the affinity which subsists between it and the functions of Respiration, and the great influence it possesses in the balance and preservation of health, as regards the processes of digestion and secretion. All these objects were to a certain degree attained, but from the imperfect state of the knowledge of Chemistry at that time, his deductions could not be so

clearly elucidated as they have since been. We have however still much to learn on the subject of Transpiration, and we have a right to expect that those who direct their attention to the Analysis of the Chemical properties of the Secretions, will at no distant time arrive at more legitimate conclusions; and do away with the mystery which, even at the present day, envelops these important processes in the animal economy.

But the work which principally formed the basis of his reputation as an Anatomist, Physiologist, and Author, was his Anatomy of the Absorbent System, published in 1786, and again in 1790. To give even a slight analysis of this valuable publication, would be trespassing too much upon our time.

He has not only demonstrated with the greatest perspicuity the structure and situation of these vessels, but has embodied under one point of view, and enriched with many judicious observations, all that was before known concerning this important system; great part of which was the result of the long and difficult anatomical investigations, carried on by him under the immediate eye of Dr. Hunter.

The merit of this book has been fully acknowledged by Translations into various foreign languages, and it may be fairly considered as forming a standard work in every Medical Library. In it the Author has not only given a correct and minute view of the discoveries, but he has also cleared away the doubts and perplexities, of former Anatomists and Physiologists, by a clear exposition of what they had seen, but what they did not fully comprehend. To this task he was the more competent, from being familiarly

acquainted with every thing previously written relative to the subject. Taken as a whole, it may be asserted that few Medical Books have been published in the English language, which display a greater degree of research; and none containing so much learning and acumen, condensed in so small a space.

Since the death of the HUNTERS, the study of Anatomy has been so much extended, that it would be a long and difficult task to take a distinct view of its general advancement. Since their time, its progress has been no less great and decided in the hands of many eminent men. It might seem invidious to point out particular success where so many have excelled, but I claim an exception for one conspicuous character, as illustrative of a point, that I am desirous of impressing on the minds of part of my present auditors, and I apprehend no contradiction when I remind them, that the esteemed and lamented Dr. Baillie, in a great measure, owed his distinguished celebrity as a Physician, to his superior attainments as an Anatomist.

If such then is the advantage resulting to a Physician from an extended knowledge of the minute structure of the human frame, may we not with propriety and confidence, call upon that learned and powerful body, the College of Physicians, to rejoice with us on the improvement of the prospects which are at length unfolded to our view? Of late, from the increasing difficulties of procuring subjects for dissection, the Study of Anatomy, in this country, seemed threatened with annihilation. But now happily, the impediments which it had to encounter, have at length attracted the attention of the enlightened Minister who is at

this time employed in the revision of the Penal Laws; and whose enlarged views are directed to every suggestion that may be calculated to benefit the public weal.

He has taken the subject into his serious consideration, and has intimated, that such measures are likely to be immediately adopted, as will in future insure a supply of subjects for the use of the anatomical schools.

That this salutary change in our prospects has been chiefly brought about by the representations of the most distinguished Individuals of both Colleges, must be a cause of sincere congratulation to every Lover of Science. Our Royal Colleges are incorporated for the express purposes of promoting and furthering the Sciences of Medicine and Surgery; and Members of each department, seem alike individually emulous to encourage every discovery, tending to the improvement of our knowledge, and the consequent mitigation of human suffering: from what cause then does it arise, that these Institutions, so intimately connected in their pursuits, have hitherto been wanting in co-operation in the prosecution of them, and have not even shown the least inclination towards an union of action, which might produce such incalculable advantages to the Public?

How is it, that a want of energy,—a degree of apathy,—is so often observed in collegiate, and other deliberative bodies, whilst many of the men composing them, are so justly celebrated for their personal zeal and activity, in the advancement of Science, and the promotion of general knowledge?

Is it, that when acting with others, the gentle and moderate are opposed to the over ardent, the timid are

overwhelmed by the vehement, and that all their efforts for the public good are in a degree paralysed? That such is really the case, we are naturally led to conclude from observing, that the members of various institutions often separate in mutual dissatisfaction, without any of the purposes of their meeting having been satisfactorily effected.

I trust that neither supineness nor jealousy will prevent any Member of our Profession, whether acting in concert or separately, from using his most strenuous endeavours, in the furtherance of a cause of such importance, as the education of young men, destined for the various branches of the medical art in our own country.

What a reproach would it be to a great and powerful Nation, that her sons should ever be compelled to leave her shores, in search of those means of anatomical instruction in another land, which were denied them in their own!

May we not be allowed to hail this commencement of a union in opinion as the happy presage of a more intimate understanding than has hitherto subsisted between the two Colleges? In consequence of this co-operation, we have gained a very important point; but still much remains to be done. The men who now fill the most prominent station in each department, stand deservedly high in the estimation of the public; were the subject strongly and conjointly urged by them, might not the Legislature be induced to grant a still further extension of the power and privileges of the two Colleges; such as should assist them in maintaining and increasing the dignity and respectability of the profession at large—by upholding and supporting, the qualified of the general practitioners, against the illegal,

and presumptuous encroachments, of those, who have intruded into, and disgraced, the Science of Medicine, to the detriment of the regularly educated, and the destruction of the health and lives of the public.

The conclusion of my task is of a melancholy nature—to record the recent loss of one of the most eminent men that ever graced our profession; and I have only to regret, that the office of eulogizing such a character as HENRY CLINE, should not have devolved upon some of his more intimate and able friends;—in whose hands, truth would not have suffered from the want of eloquence, nor the effusions of friendship have been mistaken for the empty voice of panegyric.

Full of years has he sunk into the grave; and rarely shall we meet with a man so generally, or deservedly esteemed. For he was so happily constituted, that he blended firmness and dignity, with urbanity and simplicity; and perhaps no Member of the profession, ever possessed such undisputed talents, with such an unostentatious display of them.

As a public teacher, he was at once clear, simple, and profound. Master of the subject himself, he had the invaluable art of imparting his knowledge, with so much perspicuity, that the dullest could comprehend, whilst the more intelligent were delighted.

In private practice, as he was unrivalled in surgical skill and experience, his opinion always inspired confidence in his patients; whilst his gentleness of manners soothed their

sufferings: and his liberal undeviating consideration towards those of the profession, who were associated with, or might have preceded, him in a case, was most exemplary, and cannot be too highly extolled.

In the direction of the affairs of the College, his wisdom gave weight to his arguments, whilst his temperance in maintaining them, conciliated all parties, and disposed the most contentious to adopt his opinion.

We have to lament that Mr. Cline has left behind him so few written evidences of his talents. With his intellectual powers and professional knowledge, what might not have been expected of him? But those who know how entirely his days were occupied, will not wonder, that he could find no time, as an author, to benefit the medical world with the result of his experience. Let us, however, hope, that amongst his papers, some valuable hints may yet be discovered, which by judicious arrangement, may form a posthumous work, that may still further tend to perpetuate the memory of one, whose talents have rendered him as celebrated as a Surgeon, as his integrity, and amiable qualities, have made him respected and beloved as a man.

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